

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FRB-03 INR-07 NSAE-00 USIA-06 TRSE-00 XMB-02 OPIC-03

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 1151

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ELAB, JA

SUBJECT: DOMEI HOLDS UNUSUALLY LIVELY CONVENTION

REF: 75 TOKYO 1563

SUMMARY. DOMEI LABOR FEDERATION'S 12TH ANNUAL REGUALR
CONVENTION JAN 21-23, REELECTED PRES AMAIKE AND SEC GEN
MAEKAWA FOR A THIRD CONSECUTIVE TWO YEAR TERM, UNANIMOUSLY
ADOPTED ACTION PROGRAMS CALLING FOR 13 PERCENT WAGE HIKE
THIS SPRING AND REAFFIRMED, AFTER UNUSUALLY HEATED
DEBATE, DOMEI'S EXCLUSIVE BACKING OF DEMOCRATIC SOCIALIST
PARTY(DSP). CONVENTION ALSO HEARD MUCH INCONCLUSIVE
TALK ABOUT WORKER PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT, CURRENTLY
THE MOST DISCUSSED TOPIC IN JAPANESE LABOR CIRCLES.
APART FROM PRES. AMAIKE'S REAFFIRMATION OF DOMEI'S STRONG
SUPPORT IF ICFTU AND COMMITMENT TO "FREE TRADE UNIONISM"
THERE WAS LITTLE DISCUSSION OF INTERNATIONAL ISSUES.
HOWEVER, AFL-CIO VICE PRESIDENT MARTIN WARD, ONE OF
15 INVITED FOREIGN GUESTS (INCLUDING ISRAELI,
ROC AND SOUTH KOREAN TRADE UNIONISTS(, MADE BRIEF SPEECH
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TO CONVENTION EXPLAINING US LABOR MOVEMENT'S

DISSATISFACTION WITH CURRENT STATE OF ILO. END SUMMARY.

1. DOMEI CONVENTION DEBATE DOMINATED BY ISSUE OF POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT, ISSUE SPARKED BY SEAMEN'S UNION (KAIIN) ANNOUNCEMENT LAST FALL THAT IT WOULD BACK INCUMBENT COMMUNIST DIET MEMBER FOR REELECTION AS WELL AS KOMEITO AND SOCIALIST CANDIDATES IN FORTHCOMING LOWER HOUSE ELECTIONS. LEADERS OF ALL OTHER DOMEI AFFILIATES ATTACHED KAIIN DECISION AS VIOLATION OF DOMEI PLATFORM. KAIIN VICE PRESIDENT DOC (AN ADMITTED MEMBER OF THE JCP) REPORTED THAT 20 OF 23 CANDIDATES ENDORSED BY KAIIN WERE RUNNING ON DSP TICKET AND THAT, IN ANY CASE, KAIIN'S POSITION CONSISTENT WITH PLANK ADOPTED AT ITS CONVENTION TWO YEARS AGO AUTHORIZING UNION TO SUPPORT CANDIDATES COMMITTED TO INTERESTS OF MERCHANT SEAMEN REGARDLESS OF THEIR POLITICAL PARTY AFFILIATION. KAIIN PRES MURAKAMI, A MEMBER OF DSP, REMAINED SILENT THROUGHOUT DEBATE WHICH ENDED WITH DECISION TO REFER ENTIRE MATTER TO DOMEI EXECUTIVE BOARD.

2. CONVENTION TACITLY RECOGNIZED CONTINUING RECESSION AND ACCOMPANYING UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM (WHICH LAST YEAR SAW DOMEI'S MEMBERSHIP DROP FOR FIRST TIME IN 12 YEAR HISTORY BY 50,000, MOSTLY IN TEXTILE FEDERATION), BY CALLING FOR ONLY AN AVERAGE 13 PERCENT WAGE HIKE IN 1976, AS OPPOSED TO DOMEI'S INITIAL DEMAND IN 1975 OF 27 PERCENT. (IMF-JC, TRADITIONAL PACESETTER, ALSO ASKING ONLY 13 PERCENT THIS YEAR.) LEADERS OF MAJOR DOMEI AFFILIATES ALSO ATTACKED SOHYO CALL FOR 20 PERCENT WAGE HIKE AS "IRRESPONSIBLE" AND INFLATIONARY. SOHYO-SPONSORED STRIKES TO WIN RIGHT TO STRIKE FOR NATIONAL RAILWAY AND OTHER PUBLIC CORPORATION EMPLOYEES ALSO SHARPLY ATTACKED AS UNDEMOCRATIC RESORT TO FORCE JEOPARDIZING JAPAN'S PARLIAMENTARY SYSTEM (AN ECHO OF RULING LDP CRITICISM OF LAST NOVEMBER'S RAILWAY WALKOUT).

3. COMMENT: RATHER THAN FOLLOW USUAL JAPANESE PRACTICE OF AVOIDING PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF EMBARRASSING INTERNAL PROBLEMS, STRONGLY ANTI-COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP

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OF DOMEI DECIDED THIS YEAR TO FACEUP SQUARELY TO PROBLEM CREATED BY COMMUNIST PENETRATION OF EXECUTIVE BOARD OF ONE OF ITS MAJOR AFFILIATES. MOREOVER, ALL OUT ATTACK ON SEAMEN'S UNION DECISION TO BACK SINGLE COMMUNIST IN NEXT ELECTION QUIETLY ENCOURAGED BY OTHER TOP OFFICIALS OF KAIIN WHO ATTEMPTING TO ISOLATE AND EVENTUALLY OUST VICE PRES DOI. DEBATE ON POLITICAL PARTY SUPPORT SERVED DOMEI LEADERSHIP'S PURPOSES IN

STILL ANOTHER WAY BY ENABLING IT TO RESTATE CLEARLY
THAT WHILE IT FAVORS COALITION WITH SOCIALISTS AND
KOMEITO AS MEANS OF OUSTING RULING LDP FROM POWER, IT
REMAINS UNALTERABLY OPPOSED TO ANY POLITICAL ALLIANCES
WITH THE JAPAN COMMUNIST PARTY.
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